

Department of Pathology

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16 February 2015

Dear Senator Gerratana, and Representative Ritter,

I am writing to ask you to support the licensing of genetic counselors in the state of Connecticut. Over one third of genetic counselors in the U.S. are licensed and many other states are working towards this effort.

In my position as Director of the Clinical Genomics Laboratories at the Jackson Laboratory for Genomic Medicine (Farmington, CT) and the Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center (Lebanon, NH), I have worked very closely with genetic counselors. The professional services of genetic counselors are critical to the management of patients and their families with respect to genetic data that is being resulted from the laboratory.

Genetic counselors are professionals whose training includes a Master's degree and mandatory continuing education. Genetic counselors provide an important and needed service. They have expertise in genetics and genetic counseling and function as an essential member of the health care team.

As highly trained healthcare professionals, genetic counselors have the ability to explain, accurately and in easy-to-understand terms, difficult and constantly evolving genetic information to patients; evaluate a complex family history; and, evaluate the need for genetic testing. They provide genetic information in a context of supportive care and sensitivity that is tailored to each patient's/family's particular needs.

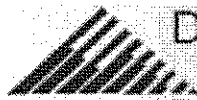
As healthcare professionals, they are required to maintain proficiency in the field through their training and continuing education covering advances in genetic technology, refinements in genetic testing and the implications of testing for the individual and their family members.

Rapid advances in genetic information and DNA sequencing technologies mandate that genetic counselors be considered a critical member of the interdisciplinary healthcare team whose services are at the forefront of patient care. With this in mind, licensure is needed in order to ensure that the quality of these professionals remains high and that the public is afforded the best level of care.

Thank you for your support. With best regards, I am  
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gregory J. Tsongalis".

Gregory J. Tsongalis, PhD, HCLD  
Professor and Director  
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Dartmouth Hitchcock  
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